

House Resolution 949

By: Representatives Benfield of the 85th, Oliver of the 83rd, Day of the 163rd, and Willard of the 49th

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the Joint Legislative and Congressional Redistricting Study Committee; and for
2 other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the states must redistrict their legislatures and congressional delegations in the
4 year following the release of the results of the United States decennial census; and

5 WHEREAS, too frequently, having this task performed by a state legislative body involves
6 a map drawing process driven by considerations of partisan advantage and incumbent
7 protection, with results that polarize the electorate, divide communities of interest, and
8 increase confusion among citizens over where their districts are located and who represents
9 them; and

10 WHEREAS, dissatisfaction with the current legislative and congressional redistricting
11 process in Georgia has been expressed by many of our citizens as well as the legislators
12 affected by the process; and

13 WHEREAS, some other states now use independent, nonpartisan commissions to implement
14 legislative and congressional redistricting or to recommend redistricting plans to their
15 legislatures so as to minimize such problems; and

16 WHEREAS, the creation of a similar independent, nonpartisan commission for purposes of
17 legislative and congressional redistricting in Georgia following the next decennial census,
18 which commission would follow principles of minimizing the division of counties and
19 municipalities, creating contiguous and compact districts, keeping communities of interest
20 together, and refraining from gerrymandering districts for partisan advantage, is worthy of
21 serious study and consideration.

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
23 GEORGIA that there is created the Joint Legislative and Congressional Redistricting Study

1 Committee to be composed of eight members. The Speaker of the House of Representatives
2 shall appoint three members of the House of Representatives as members of the committee
3 and shall designate one of such members as cochairperson. The Speaker of the House of
4 Representatives shall also appoint one additional member of the committee who shall be a
5 member of Common Cause Georgia. The President Pro Tem of the Senate shall appoint
6 three members of the Senate as members of the committee and shall designate one of such
7 members as cochairperson. The President Pro Tem of the Senate shall also appoint one
8 additional member of the committee who shall be a staff member of the University of
9 Georgia Carl Vinson Institute of Government. The cochairpersons shall call all meetings of
10 the committee.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee shall undertake a study of the conditions,
12 needs, issues, and problems mentioned above or related thereto and recommend any action
13 or legislation which the committee deems necessary or appropriate. The committee may
14 conduct such meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem necessary or
15 convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform its duties, and
16 accomplish the objectives and purposes of this resolution. The legislative members of the
17 committee shall receive the allowances provided for in Code Section 28-1-8 of the Official
18 Code of Georgia Annotated. Any citizen member shall receive a daily expense allowance in
19 the amount specified in subsection (b) of Code Section 45-7-21 of the Official Code of
20 Georgia Annotated as well as the mileage or transportation allowance authorized for state
21 employees. Any member of the committee who is a state employee shall receive no
22 compensation for his or her service on the committee, but he or she shall be reimbursed for
23 expenses incurred by him or her in the performance of his or her duties as a member of the
24 committee in the same manner as he or she is reimbursed for expenses in his or her capacity
25 as a state employee. The funds necessary for reimbursement of any state employee shall
26 come from funds appropriated to or otherwise available to his or her respective department.
27 All other funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds
28 appropriated to the House of Representatives and the Senate. The expenses and allowances
29 authorized by this resolution shall not be received by any member of the committee for more
30 than five days unless additional days are authorized. In the event the committee makes a
31 report of its findings and recommendations, with suggestions for proposed legislation, if any,
32 such report shall be made on or before December 1, 2005. The committee shall stand
33 abolished on December 1, 2005.